

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 PER-01 OPR-02 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
/057 W

-----162341Z 069934 /70

O R 162208Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1098

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, PN, PQ

SUBJECT: PANAMANIAN MEDIA COVERAGE ON CANAL EMPLOYEE ASSURANCES

REFS: A. STATE 056588; B. PANAMA 1897

SUMMARY: LOCAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF PANCANAL EMPLOYEE
ASSURANCES STATEMENT HAS BEEN FAIRLY WIDESPREAD, BUT NO
COMMENT OR PUBLIC EVIDENCE OF OFFICIAL GOP
REACTION HAS YET EMERGED. END SUMMARY.

1. STATEMENT ON ASSURANCES FOR CANAL EMPLOYEES (REFTELS)
WAS INITIALLY ISSUED BY GOVERNOR PARFITT TO PANCANAL
MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS AT A MEETING WITH THEM AT 0830
TUESDAY, MARCH 15, AND THEN AT A MEETING BETWEEN
GOVERNOR AND CANAL ZONE CIVIC COUNCIL AND LABOR UNION LEADERS
AT 1030 SAME DAY IN PANCANAL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.
COPIES OF STATEMENT, IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH TRANSLATION
PREPARED BY PANCANAL, WERE DISTRIBUTED AT BOTH MEETINGS.

2. ON MARCH 15, PANCANAL INFORMATION OFFICE RELEASED COPIES OF
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STATEMENT, IN BOTH LANGUAGES, TO LOCAL MEDIA. WE UNDERSTAND
THAT TEXT WILL ALSO BE PUBLISHED IN PANCANAL AGENCY ORGAN "SPILLWAY"
APPEARING ON THURSDAY, MARCH 17.

3. ITEM WAS COVERED IN SOME DETAIL ON 6:00 P.M. NEWSCASTS
MARCH 15 ON BOTH PANAMA CITY TELEVISION CHANNELS
(FBIS/PANAMA/PA 160128Y, PA 160500). CHANNEL 4 BROADCAST

NOTED THAT "15 CLAUSES, REPRESENTING THE MINIMAL GUARANTEES TO BE PROVIDED TO CURRENT PANAMA CANAL EMPLOYEES IN THE NEW TREATY BEING NEGOTIATED, PARTICULARLY TO U.S. CITIZENS" HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED BY SECRETARY OF THE ARMY ALEXANDER AND BY U.S. NEGOTIATORS "IN ORDER TO CALM U.S. CANAL EMPLOYEES." ANNOUNCER CONTINUED THAT "THE FUTURE OF CANAL WORKERS HAS BEEN THE CONCERN OF BOTH NEGOTIATING TEAMS. GEN. OMAR TORRIJOS HIMSELF, THE PANAMANIAN CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT, HAS REPEATEDLY STATED THAT ALL OF THE CANAL WORKERS' LABOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WILL BE MAINTAINED IN THE NEW TREATY." AFTER SUMMARIZING THE TEXT OF THE PANCANAL STATEMENT, THE ITEM CONCLUDED "IT IS NOT KNOWN WHETHER THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT AGREES WITH THIS DISCLOSURE OF THE COURSE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS."

4. ONLY PUBLIC INDICATION OF REACTION BY A GOP OFFICIAL TO DATE IS CONTAINED IN LATIN WIRE SERVICE ITEM (FBIS/PANAMA PA 160418Y) QUOTING FOREIGN MINISTER GONZALEA-REVILLA AS SAYING THAT QUERY BY WIRE SERVICE WAS FIRST REPORT HE HAD HEARD OF MATTER. FYI: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH FOREIGN MINISTER EVENING OF MONDAY, MARCH 14, BUT DID NOT PROVIDE HIM WITH TEXT OF STATEMENT, WHICH HAD NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED BY EMBASSY, NOR WAS MINISTER SPECIFICALLY INFORMED THAT PUBLIC RELEASE OF TEXT WAS PLANNED, AS EMBASSY UNAWARE AT TIME THAT THIS WAS ENVISIONED. END FYI.

5. MORNING PRESS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, GAVE WIDE BUT RELATIVELY NEUTRAL COVERAGE. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE "STAR AND HERALD" PRINTED FULL TEXT OF STATEMENT, IN AN ARTICLE COMBINED WITH EXCERPT FROM A SPEECH BY TREATY NEGOTIATOR LOPEZ-GUEVARA ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ANOTHER SUBJECT (SEPTTEL), UNDER 8-COLUMN BANNER "LIST US TREATY LABOR PROPOSALS". COMPANION SEMI-INDEPENDENT "ESTRELLA" PRINTED TEXT IN PAGE-ONE ARTICLE (LEAD WAS LONGER ITEM ON LOPEZ-GUEVARA SPEECH) UNDER SIMILAR HEADLINE. GOP-GUIDED "MATUTINO" CARRIED TEXT OF PANCANAL RELEASE WITHOUT AMPLICATION IN FRONT-PAGE LEAD POSITION UNDER HEADLINE "A DOCUMENT AND 15 CLAUSES". "CRITICA" GAVE SPACE ONLY ON BACK PAGE FOR AN ACAN-EFE WIRE SERVICE ITEM WITH A BRIEF AND IMCOMPLETE SUMMARY OF STATEMENT UNDER HEADLINE "POSSIBLE AGREEMENTS ON LABOR SUBJECTS ARE PUBLISHED".

6. THERE WAS NO COMMENT AT ALL, EDITORIAL OR COLUMNIST, IN ANY MORNING PAPER ABOUT THIS SUBJECT. GOP OFFICIAL RADIO STATION "RADIO LIBERTAD", WHICH HAS BEEN OFF THE AIR FOR A MONTH, RETURNED TO ACTION AT MIDNIGHT MARCH 15 AS SCHEDULED, BUT HAS CARRIED NO MENTION OF THIS STORY SO FAR ON MARCH 16.

7. WILL REPORT FURTHER MEDIA REACTION SEPTTEL.
JORDEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, LABOR RELATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, CANALS, EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCES, PRESS RELEASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PANAMA01910
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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